Zero Hour is becoming more important than the regular proceedings. So many Members have been allowed on this.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: In the light of the concern expressed by the hon. Members in the House I will draw the attention of the hon. Finance Minister and ask him to see what he can do in the matter...(*Interruptions*) I will draw the attention of the Finance Minister. As you see, I cannot make a statement on this. He will do what he wants to do. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I think that the Members have expressed their views and the Government also think that it is a serious matter. I would ask the Finance Minister to make a statement.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Today.

[*English*]

DR. VENKATESHWARLU UMMAREDDY (Tenali): It has become a regular feature that several villages on East Coast right from Tada to Ichhapuram particularly in Diviseema and Naidamolu areas in Krishna District and Rapalle, Vemur, Tenali, Duggirala and Mangalgiri areas in Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh are chronically cyclone and flood prone areas. During 1977, 1986 and 1990 floods, cyclones and tidal waves, thousands of persons have died losing cattle and poultry population and fish farms, suffered hundreds of crores worth of crops and orchards rendering millions of poor inhabitants homeless and losing the total equipment by the handloom weavers and fishermen folk with every calamity. Neither the insurance institutions nor the Government agencies could adequately compensate the losses suffered by millions of people on such occasions, thereby several families have been deprived of their livelihood. There should be a comprehensive scheme to rescue the unfortunate victims who suffer at the fury of the nature persistently because of their locational disadvantage. Any amount of temporary and meagre assistance provided by the Government and voluntary organisations do not help them in any way for restoring their losses and livelihood. I urge upon the Government to think about certain long term and permanent measures such as large scale pucca housing programme, effective crop, cattle, poultry, handloom and hut insurance scheme and also creation of a permanent natural calamities disaster stabiliastion fund so that the State Government could immediately draw up and swing into rescue operations in a big way without waiting for the visit of the Central teams. Further, these areas can be declared as natural calamity zone and provided assistance or special grants to strengthen the flood banks. This aspect deserves special attention of the Government.

SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNAIAH (Tumkur): While agreeing with the views expressed by Shri Venkateshwarlu I would also like to draw the attention of the Government that my constituency in Karnataka is terribly affected by floods. I learn and heard that the Prime Minister has said about Bihar and Maharashtra having been affected, and some amount has been allotted to meet the demands of the affected people. But my demand is that the Government should come forward to send a Central team to Karnataka to assess the damage caused. Actually, property and crops worth Rs. ten crores to Rs. fifteen crores have been damaged. There is loss of animals and more than eleven persons have died...(*Interruptions*) Terrible devastation has taken place. Therefore, my humble request is that the Central Government should send a Central team to assess the exact damage caused to the property and the people. I expected the Government to come forward to send a team by this time